

Opening of Murray Bridge Office

On the 10th of December 2014 the Member for Barker, Mr Tony Pasin MP officially opened the Community Bridging Services (CBS Inc) Murray Bridge Office. The new office space is spacious and modern and both clients and staff have warmed to the welcoming new environment. Rima Staugas, CBS Board Member did a wonderful job as MC for the event. Guest speakers included CBS Executive Director, Freddie Brincat OAM and CBS Jobnet client Luke Pillar. Luke provided a wonderful story about how Jobnet has changed his life for the better.

The event was well attended with CBS staff and clients, local employers and other agencies in attendance. We were also lucky enough to have the State Member for Hammond, Adrian Pederick and Mayor of the Mid Murray Council, Dave Burgess in attendance also. The event was very successful and enjoyed by all.



Lukes Story

My name is Luke and I have been a Jobnet client at Murray Bridge for around 2 years.

When I first started with Jobnet I had never worked in open employment before. I had previously worked with Bedford Industries as a gardener and landscaper which I really enjoyed.

I left Bedford because I moved to Murray Bridge and joined Jobnet because I wanted to get a job in horticulture or the automotive industry. I like mountain bikes and was also interested in working in a bike shop but this a really hard industry to get into.

CBS helped me develop a resume and supported me to look for work.

It took me a little while before I got a job, but eventually CBS was able to get me a job with Knights Party Hire. CBS bought me a new uniform and boots for work. The new uniform was very snazzy and fit nicely.

I was very nervous when I started with Tony and Carol at Knights and had to remind myself to stay calm, but eventually I got used to working there.

I like getting paid for my work and spend most of my money on Kayden, my son. I am more financially independent now and find it easier to save money. I even bought a new bike for transport.

I am currently saving for a family holiday to Coffin Bay. Going on a proper holiday is something I was unable to do before I started working. Work has helped me improve my capacity to remember things. I used to forget lots of things but now I find it a bit easier to remember important things.

I'm now working with Fi at CBS to try and get my L's so I can be more independent and take my family to different places.

I'd like to congratulate CBS on opening their new office. It's very spacious and comfortable and it's central so easier to get to for most people.

The people at CBS are very easy to talk to and kind and can help you with any problem you might have.



Speech made by Mr Tony Pasin MP

Friends, thank you for the opportunity to speak today about the important work being undertaken by the Community Bridging Service here in the Murraylands and also to expand upon the benefits of employing people with a disability not just for employers but also for our national prosperity.

2. I was very pleased recently to be able to announce that CBS, along with Workskil, successfully tendered for the opportunity to provide employment services for people with a disability.

3. Over 4 million Australians have a disability. That's 1 in 5 people.

4. 1 in 3 people either has disability or is likely to be close to someone who has disability and 2.1 million Australians of working age (15 –64 years) have disability.

5. 3.4 million (15%) Australians have a physical disability.

6. 1 in 6 Australians are affected by hearing loss. There are approximately 30,000 Deaf Auslan users with total hearing loss.

7. Vision Australia estimates there are currently 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or have low vision.

8. Around 668,100 Australians have intellectual and/or development disorders.

9. 10% of the population has dyslexia. That's more than two million Australians.

10. More than 90,000 people have a mental health disorder and almost 90 per cent of disabilities are not visible.

11. As you know, CBS is a Not-for-Profit organisation with the goal of helping clients achieve success by working with them to plan their futures, achieve their personal goals and improve their quality of life.

12. The dedicated staff here focus on their clients' strengths and interests through mutual respect and understanding, and is a recognised leader in the provision of support for people with disability in the areas of open employment, personal support, further education and recreation.

13. People with disability are often characterised by a high degree of dedication and commitment to their role. Employers can access valuable employees who are reliable, skilled and have a great attitude and desire to work when they employ people with disability.

14. Disability Employment Services offer a range of free services to help employers recruit and retain people with disability, injury or health condition including:

a. professional recruitment advice and job matching

b. help with job design for employees with disability

c. on-the-job or off-site support to ensure new employees with disability settle into their job

d. ongoing support for as long as it is required, for employees and employers who require support to maintain their employment

e. disability employment information and awareness training

f. help for employees whose job may be in jeopardy as a result of their disability.

15. A recent report from the Business Council of Australia found that in order to remain competitive, business needs to reconsider methods of attracting and retaining employees. Attracting, recruiting and retaining employees with disability can provide a significant and often overlooked opportunity for business, and a solution to Australia's skills crisis.

16. When organisations make their selection processes barrier-free to people with disability, they ensure that all potential employees with the relevant skills, qualifications and experience are able to apply.

17. Employers benefit by increasing the size of the talent pool from which they recruit, making it easier to find the best person for the job.

18. Other benefits of employing people with disability include low absenteeism and employee turnover, low incidence of workplace injury*, and improved employee loyalty, which all help to create cost effective businesses. These benefits include:

a. · Attract and retain the best candidates from the widest talent pool

b. · Retain employees who have valuable experience and Knowledge

c. · Reduce sick leave and early 'medical' retirements

d. · Strengthen workplace morale and productivity

e. · Reduce workplace incidents

f. · Reduce the risk of claims of unlawful discrimination

19. Research has shown that there is a strong business case, as well as an ethical case, for employing people with disability. Having employees with disability can help business to understand what their customers or clients with disability may need, which can give you an edge over your competitors.

20. Having a workforce that reflects the diversity of the wider community, your customers and shareholders can lead to greater customer loyalty and satisfaction.

21. Services such as CBS are helping to bridge the gap between the economic necessity of increasing access to a quality workforce and the deeply qualified and committed people who will make up that new workforce in the future.

22. As Australia's populations becomes older, being able to meet the needs of a workforce which has some level of disability will be essential if we are to remain competitive and continue to enjoy the economic strength we currently have.

23. It is my distinct pleasure to now declare the Murray Bridge Community Bridging Services Office open.